

Imam Johari Abdul-Malik
Coordinating Council of Muslim Organizations of Greater Washington
Case 04-33 Mandatory Inclusionary Zoning
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Good Evening, my name is Imam Johari Abdul-Malik and I'm President of the Coordinating Council of Muslim Organizations of Greater Washington representing over 250,000 Muslims living in the DC Metropolitan Area and approximately 55,000 Muslim living in the District of Columbia. I live at 1342 Rittenhouse St NW Washington, DC and I'm here to testify in support of the Campaign for Mandatory Inclusionary Zoning.

I also serve as the chair of government relations for the Muslim Alliance in North America. I am a founding member of the Muslim Advocacy Commission of Washington, DC and helped start the Ramadan Feed-the-Needy program in DC, so social issues of poverty, hunger, and homelessness are very important to me and my faith.

The Muslim community and the affordable housing movement share common goals of social justice, equal opportunity, and fair treatment. In fact, the history of Islam is rooted in a firm stance against economic exploitation. When Prophet Muhammed ibn Abdullah, pbuh, began teaching Islam in Mecca, it shook up an unjust economic structure that allowed the rich to take advantage of the poor.

Islam teaches that the community has a duty to help its impoverished overcome the holds of poverty and learn to support them. The community helps the poor cope with their hardship. Islam says that society must make a collective effort toward eliminating all poverty and giving everyone equal opportunities.

Not only is it important that people of different backgrounds, different cultures, and different religions live in the same neighborhoods. It is imperative that they live on the same street and in the same apartment buildings. Racial and religious struggles result from a lack of understanding and acceptance. People of different beliefs need to interact on a daily basis for us to thrive as a multicultural society. Mandatory inclusionary zoning creates mixed income, multiracial, multi-religious communities that benefit every person living in that community.

There is a commonality of the human spirit, regardless of our faith tradition, ethnicity, and social status- and it is important for our children to gain that understanding by living with people of different incomes and religions.

The Muslim faith teaches us to stand for justice- even against your own self- and to establish justice that transcends faith.

1400 years ago, the Prophet Muhammad, pbuh, said something that is still applicable today and will be applicable forever: None of you has faith unless you love for your brother what you love for yourself. This is why I urge you to pass the Campaign's proposal for mandatory inclusionary zoning.

